

6 September 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: Briefing Note on Intelligence Assumptions for
Planning: Soviet ICBM Sites, 1961-1967

1. An estimate on this subject was specifically requested by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in support of US planning for nuclear weapons allocation. Because 1967 is so far beyond the period for which we have any evidence to point to the likely course of the Soviet ICBM program, we have regarded our task as one of providing a reasonable range of assumptions. This technique has been employed in the past to meet specific requests by the NSC for numerical estimates far into the future.

2. As a consequence, there are two deviations from the procedure normally followed in preparing and distributing estimates. First, a wide range of numbers is

prescribed in order to accommodate likely alternative combinations of Soviet strategy and technology and to bracket the wide range of views within the intelligence community. Second, it is proposed to limit distribution of the paper outside the intelligence community to the requestor only.

3. Despite our attempt to cover a wide range of alternatives, substantive differences remain on a few points. Present reservations are by Air Force. It is the only agency wishing specifically to estimate that Soviet ICBM strength in 1967 will approximate one side of the assumed range, the high side. It believes there will be a much larger number of hardened ICBM sites, on the basis that the Soviets will deploy second generation missiles in fully-hardened facilities. No other agency believes this is practical. Air Force reservations in support of these positions are on pages 4, 12, and 16.

4. Because of the limited time available for this project, no cleanup session was held. A few changes to

clean up the text and resolve inconsistencies will be
proposed by GLE at the briefing session.

FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES:

JOSEPH A. ROST
Chairman